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FORTUNES WASHED AWAY

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P.M. - E.S.T.

A SERIES OF DRAMATIZATIONS OF BETTER LAND USE.

No. 176

"HONEY HOLLOW"

September 6, 1941

ORGAN THEME: DEEP RIVER

VOICE

We took it for granted that land was everlasting;

We said ownership of the land insured security.

Tools would wear out, men would die --

But the land would remain.

ORGAN: ABRUPT DISCORD

ANNOUNCER (cold)

Fortunes Washed Away!

ORGAN: DEEP RIVER, fading behind...

ANNOUNCER

A long time ago, a handful of Swedes lived in peace and friendship among the Indians in a wilderness. Men from the four corners of the earth joined them, made a mighty state. That state is Pennsylvania -- Penn's Woods. And on the eastern fringe you'll find Bucks County -- land of solid houses of stone, great stone barns, trim acres, fat cattle that stray lazily through the deep grass or lie in the shade of the trees or browse among the water-loving sycamores along the streams. Here, near New Hope, is a pleasant watershed -- Honey Hollow -- scene of the 176th consecutive episode of "Fortunes Washed Away."

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ORGAN: UP AND OUT

ANNOUNCER

The story of the Honey Hollow Creek watershed is entwined among the lives of just a few people, perhaps...

ORGAN: ON THE BANKS OF THE BRANDYWINE

NARRATOR

May I tell that story? You see, I know Honey Hollow Creek, and its people. It empties into Aquetong Creek that flows into the Delaware River. Oh, it may not be a famous boundary river like the Rio Grande, and salmon don't spawn in it like the Columbia, it never was a lumber river like the Susquehanna or the Kalamazoo. It doesn't have the historic lore of the Brandywine. It's just a little stream on the eastern seaboard, flowing through lowlands and hills, past small-farm agriculture. There are only seven farms in the watershed. One of them was the Hurley farm, where P. A. Waring was working in 1926. Waring came into the house one day...

SOUND: Door opens...

WARING

Those leghorns are looking pretty good, Mr. Hurley.

HURLEY

That's what comes from good blood, Al.

WARING

Hello, Beulah.

BEULAH

Morning, Al.

HURLEY

You see, we have good chickens just like we have good land...it's all a long-time proposition...sit down, Al.

WARING

Thanks.

HURLEY

It's just a matter of proper treatment, and care. (LAUGHING) Oh, but why should I be telling a fellow from Georgia things like this?

WARING

I want to learn the farming business.

HURLEY

I know you do, young fellow.

BEULAH

You've learned about everything else, Al.

WARING

Jack of all trades, and master of none.

BEULAH

But you have been around.

HURLEY

Yes, young fellow, you have.

WARING

Maybe too much, but I've enjoyed it. Now I'm ready to settle down. Raising chickens like you, perhaps.

HURLEY

Settle down? After you've been around the world? Oh, you might tell us about that. We've time before dinner.

WARING

Oh, you wouldn't want...

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BEULAH

Please, Al.

HURLEY

Go ahead, young fellow -- just for my sake. And I'm...positive...you won't be boring my daughter.

BEULAH

Now, father....

WARING

Oh, it wasn't much. After I left the army, I worked my way around the world, doing this and that. It was mighty interesting. I was in Europe, China, Japan, and in India for a year. Oh, that was an interesting experience.

BEULAH

Tell us about it, Al.

HURLEY

Don't rush him, Beulah.

BEULAH

Well, I...

WARING

It's too long a story. To cut it short, while I was in Bengal I met the Rabindranath Tagore. He gave me a letter to the Maharanee of Mour -- something -- anyhow, she was the wife of the ruler of one of those states, and I got a job giving English lessons to her 15-year-old son.

BEULAH

How interesting!

WARING

Yes, it was. But like I said, now I'm ready to settle down. I'm not a native around here, Mr. Hurley, but it hurts me to see so much land ruined. Soil erosion is so costly.

HURLEY

It is, young fellow. You're not the first to notice it. My ancestral home, just two miles from here...(COUGHS) Well, we won't go into that. But as long as you're talking about travels...

WARING

You asked me to.

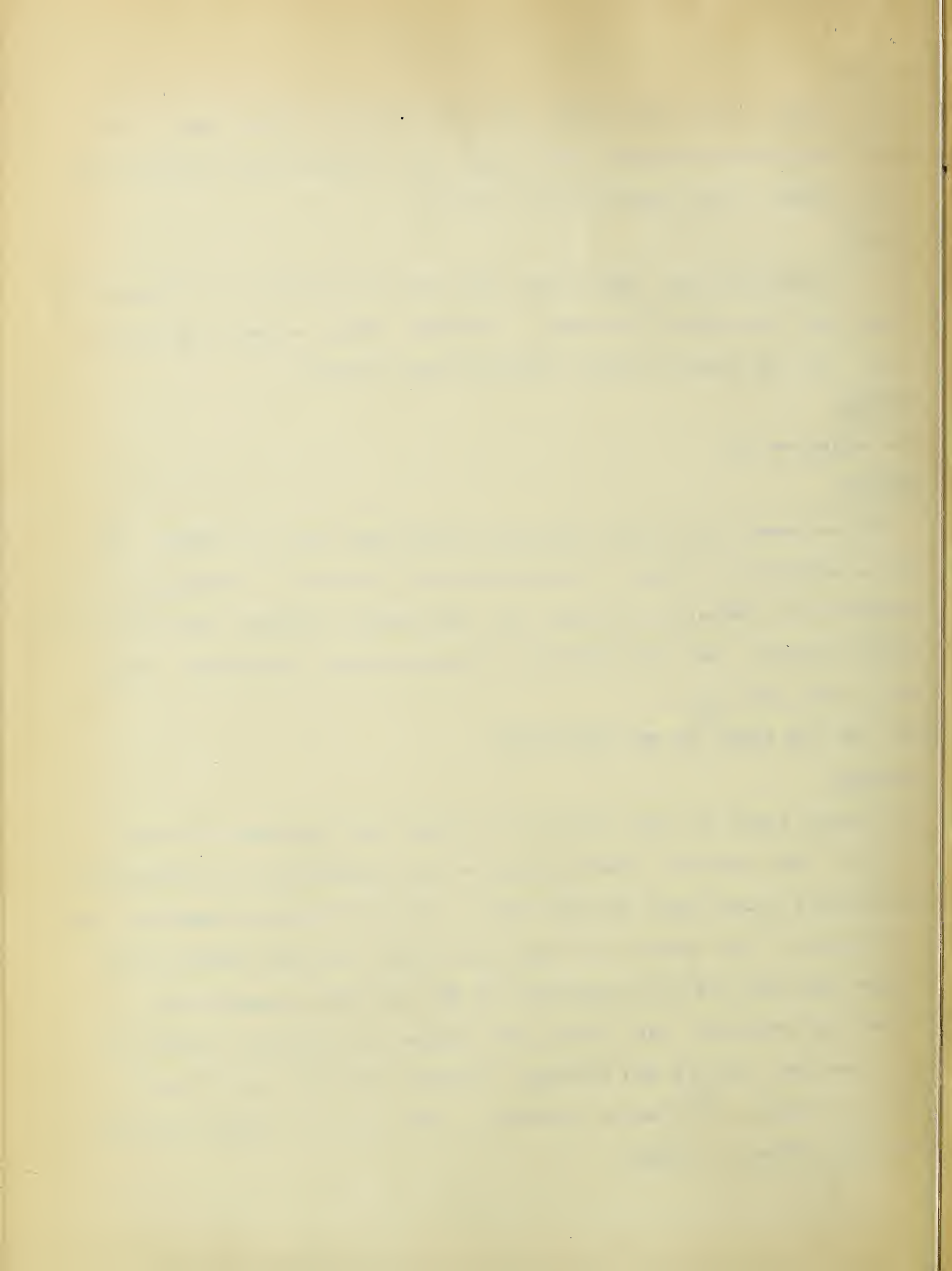
HURLEY

A fellow named Peter Kalm traveled around here once...a Swede. He was a botanist by trade, a conservationist by heart. He deplored the erosion and exhaustion of good soil from hasty farming, the destruction of the forests, and the depletion of many natural resources. That was a long time ago.

ORGAN: ON THE BANKS OF THE BRANDYWINE

NARRATOR

Why should there be soil erosion to invade the happiness of Honey Hollow? Why shouldn't there always be the prosperity of a permanent agriculture along Honey Hollow Creek -- and with that prosperity, the loveliness of the carpets of dogtooth violets in early spring, and Johnny-jump-ups and wild geraniums in May and June, magnificent columns of chestnut, oak, beech, and linden, and fertile fields of corn, barley, alfalfa and timothy? Because we didn't know how to farm, I suppose...but we're learning. Just as P. A. Waring learned. Two years after....(FADE)



SOUND: Hammer striking plowshare...

BEULAH

My! You're so strong, Al!

WARING

Not as strong as Joe Magarac!

BEULAH

Joe Magarac!

WARING

Yep.

SOUND: Hammer strikes several more blows...

BEULAH

Never heard of him.

WARING

Strong guy. He could make 2,000 tons of steel a day, when he felt good. He could stop a locomotive with one hand.

BEULAH

Now, Al...

WARING

It's the truth. Never heard of him?

BEULAH

Never did.

WARING

Well, I'll tell you a little story about him...about him and Steve Mestrovic's daughter, Mary. She was a beautiful girl, the prize of the country. One day Steve decided that it was time for her to get married...

BEULAH

That time comes for everyone.

WARING

Yeah, yeah...I know. Well, Steve sent out word that a contest would be held at his home the next Sunday, and the one who could lift three dolly bars -- they're heavy -- the one who could lift three dolly bars would get Mary as his wife. And here they came, from all around.

BEULAH

What an awful way to get a wife!

WARING

Anyhow, Steve's wife made an extra supply of apple butter, and he ordered the three dolly bars. One weighed 350 pounds, the second 500 pounds, and the third about a thousand pounds.

BEULAH

So this Joe Magarac lifted them all.

WARING

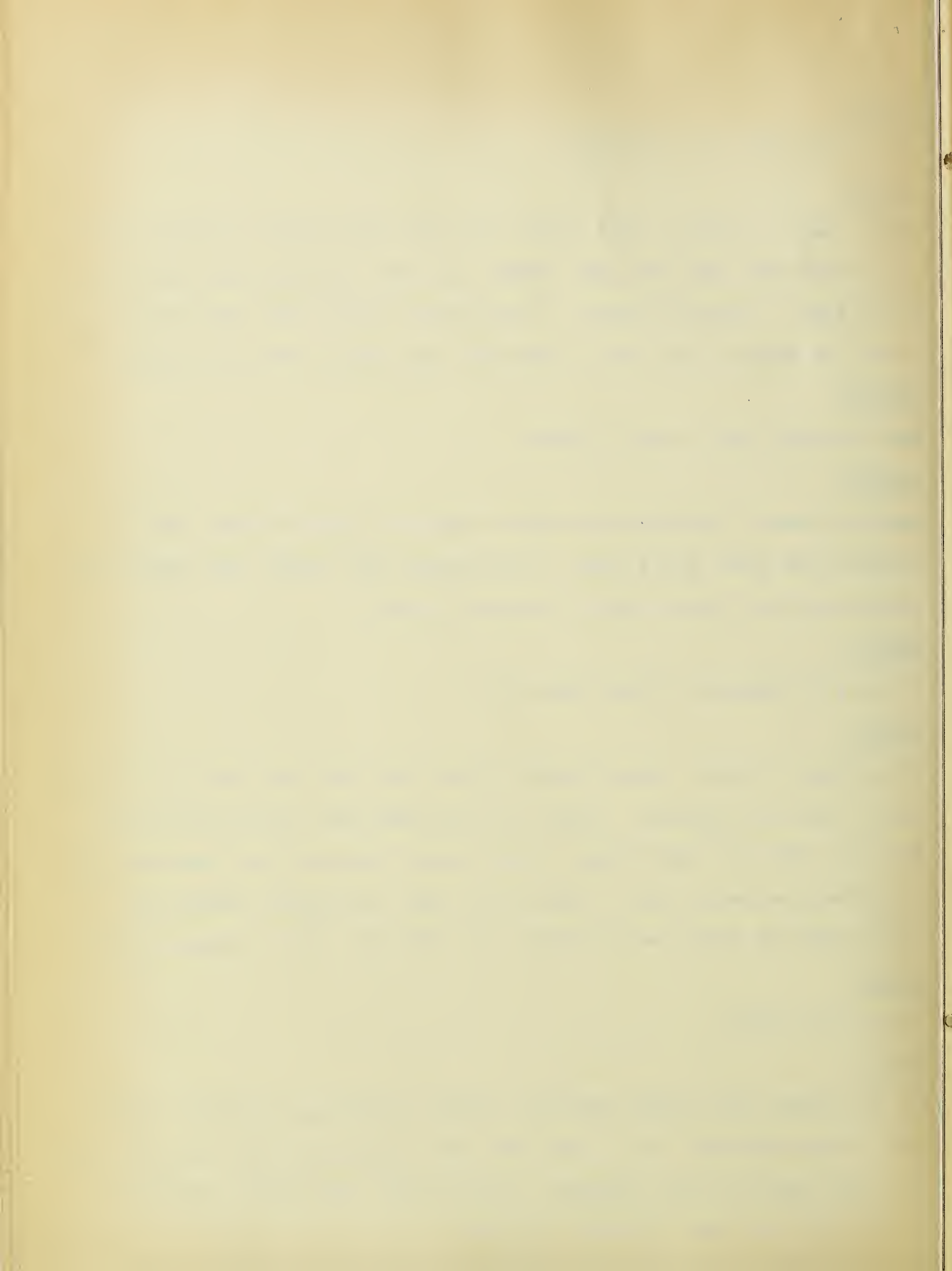
I'm coming to that. Pete Pussick lifted the first bar with no trouble, and so did Eli Stanoski. Then two from Homestead tried and failed, and boy, did the crowd laugh. Along come a fellow from Johnstown and he lifted the second bar. About that time Joe Magarac walked up, shook them all aside, and twisted the third bar into a figure-eight.

BEULAH

And got the girl.

WARING

No, he worked both night and day, without stopping, and didn't have time to get married. So it was Pete who finally married the girl, and Joe took board at Mrs. Horkey's. Not a room, just meals, because he worked all the time. (PAUSE) Beulah?



BEULAH

Yes, Al.

WARING

Will you marry me?

BEULAH

Of course, Al.

ORGAN: ON THE BANKS OF THE BRANDYWINE

NARRATOR

Many big waters floated the bark and dugout canoes of Indians and settlers -- the Delaware, Susquehanna, Allegheny, Ohio -- the Brandywine. Honey Hollow Creek is just a little water, but it ran muddy after heavy rains, and that mud came from the seven farms in the Honey Hollow watershed. You see, we in Honey Hollow began to realize that, lately, we'd begun to notice the spots on our farms where the soil had worn thin and the crops grew poorly. P. A. Waring realized that, too, when he went to his new father-in-law in 1929...

(FADE)

HURLEY

....I tell you, Al, you're making a big mistake.

WARING

Maybe so, Mr. Hurley, but I want to buy that farm.

HURLEY

But it's nothing more than a weed and briar patch. Been abandoned since world war days.

WARING

I know that.

HURLEY

The hill fields are gullied, and the bottomlands are covered with soil washed from those hills.

WARING

I know that, too. But I want a farm of my own -- for Beulah and me. I've got some farming ideas of my own, too. Mr. Hurley, I figure that that farm isn't ruined -- it's just been hurt terribly. It will take a lot of time, a lot of planning, a lot of work. And recently, I've gotten the philosophy of some of the old farmers here in Bucks County -- that the land is dear, the soil is precious, it's our very life. Maybe we need to work together to protect that soil.

HURLEY

Young fellow, for a city boy, you've been getting some good farming ideas.

WARING

I don't know about that. But I feel that the control of soil erosion, for example, is a neighborhood problem, a community problem, one that extends across farm boundaries. For so many years farmers have been thinking in terms of their own farms and their own farm boundaries. Now they've got to understand that they must work together to prevent soil erosion.

HURLEY (huskily)

You're right, young fellow. Go buy that farm, work with your fellow-men, and God be with you.

ORGAN: ON THE BANKS OF THE BRANDYWINE

NARRATOR

Well, you can guess the rest. The story of this young couple in Honey Hollow has a happy ending. They bought the farm, built it up, preserved its soil, are still preserving it. They worked with their neighbors, and today, the entire group of farmers in Honey Hollow watershed are working together, building terraces, laying out strip cropping, liming and fertilizing their soil. The symmetrically rounded hills and the side valleys, the forest lands, the meadows and the croplands, are becoming a land of beauty and dignity. Honey Hollow is just a little creek, but the farmers who dwell in its watershed are showing what can be done to preserve the soil of America.

ORGAN: UP AND OUT.

ANNOUNCER (cold)

That is the true story of P. A. Waring, of Bucks County, Pennsylvania, and here are the words of Mr. Waring: "The aim of the man who undertakes the conservation of the soil is two-fold: He seeks to increase the return on his own labor and investment by methods that will improve his yields; and he strives to hold the soil where it is, to preserve the natural resource which is the base of his life, for himself, and for his children after him, and for society. One aim is to achieve results now during his own life. The other is long range, and based upon a sense of responsibility toward society in the handling of the land which he works." Those are the words of P. A. Waring, of Bucks County, Pennsylvania. This, the 176th consecutive episode of "Fortunes Washed Away," was brought to you by the nation's Station through the cooperation of the Soil Conservation Service of the United States Department of Agriculture. And now, friends, the "Eleventh Commandment."

ORGAN: DEEP RIVER.

ANNOUNCER

"Thou shalt inherit the holy earth as a faithful steward, conserving its resources and productivity from generation to generation. Thou shalt safeguard thy fields from soil erosion, thy living waters from drying up, thy forests from desolation, and protect thy hills from overgrazing by thy herds, so that thy descendants may have abundance forever. If any shall fail in this stewardship of the land thy fruitful fields shall become sterile stony ground and wasting gullies, and thy descendants shall decrease and live in poverty or be destroyed from off the face of the earth."

ORGAN: UP AND OUT.

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